

**TOWN OF GLASTONBURY
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2017**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held the Annual Town Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury, Connecticut. Also present was Dr. Alan Bookman, Superintendent of Schools, Susan Karp, Board Chairman and Members of the Boards of Education and Finance.

1. Roll Call

Council Members

Dr. Stewart Beckett III, Chairman
Mr. Whit C. Osgood, Vice Chairman *{excused}*
Mrs. Jill Barry *{excused}*
Ms. Karen Boisvert *{excused}*
Mr. Lawrence J. Byar
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh *{excused}*
Mr. William T. Finn
Mr. Thomas P. Gullotta *{excused}*
Ms. Cara T. Keefe *{excused}*

1. Town Clerk to call Town Meeting to order.

Mrs. Joyce Mascena

Mrs. Mascena welcomed everyone to the annual meeting and led the pledge of allegiance. She spoke to the first Council that voted on items, some the same as the current Council like the budget and schools and some different like defending the highway and digging graves.

2. Election of Acting Clerk.

Nomination By: Council Chairman Beckett ***Seconded By:*** Board of Education Chairman Karp
Kimberly Meanix Miller for Acting Clerk

Mrs. Mascena called for other nominations but hearing none, she closed the nominations and called for a vote.

Result: Motion passes unanimously with no nay votes voiced.

3. Election of Moderator of Town Meeting.

Nomination By: Board of Education Chairman Karp **Seconded By:** Council Chairman Beckett
Raymond Hassett as Moderator.

Mrs. Mascena called for other nominations but hearing none, she closed the nominations and called for a vote.

Result: Motion passes unanimously with no nay votes voiced.

Mr. Hassett said this was his 5th year as moderator and that he was told he holds the record. He noted that this meeting is an important charter requirement to review the budgets and voice a non binding, advisory vote. He urged people to sign up for public comment.

4. Opening remarks by Town Council Chair, Stewart Beckett.

Chairman Beckett said that it was important they control their own destiny despite the tempest at the state and national levels. He spoke to the grand list growth and the 400 new apartments, which will offer new living options to residents in town. He spoke to the successful negotiation for the purchase of MDC property after 40 years of effort. He said that they will be rebuilding Hebron Avenue from Sycamore to Main Street with new pavement, elimination of lights and two new roundabouts that will reduce delay and increase safety as well as improve the pedestrian friendly town center. He spoke to the development of a bike and walk trail to provide safe passage from the eastern portion of town to the town center. He stated that they have concerns about the financial issues of the state reducing their revenues but they have a healthy fund balance, declining debt service and a AAA bond rating that will help them weather these potential difficulties.

5. Remarks by Board of Education Chair, Susan Karp. *Spoke under 6 (b)*

6. Presentation on Budgets:

(a) Town Operating and Debt & Transfer Budget and Capital Improvement Program Budget. (Town Manager)

Mr. Johnson reviewed a PowerPoint noting a 4% increase in expenses although several items are fully offset by an increase in revenues noting that 50% of the items are flat or decreasing. He noted examples of the increases that are offset being the emergency dispatch, employee co-pays for insurance and tip fees. He spoke to factors influencing the budget listing wages, insurance, pension, OPEB, utilities and fuel and capital outlay with the rest of the accounts only increasing a total of three-tenths of one percent. He noted that the state had enacted a 2.5% spending cap

that is likely to be rescinded but regardless, the town was within the threshold anyway. He reviewed debt and transfers saying that they would sustain the \$5M and are realizing savings in debt service. He said that they are proposing a 2.8% budget increase combined with the Board of Education. He reviewed revenues and transfers projecting a net decrease of \$1.2M given the likely decrease in revenues from the state. He said that grand list growth is projected to be at least 1% and collection rates are assumed at 99.2% for real estate and 98.5% for motor vehicles. He reviewed the capital improvement program, town aid and sewer sinking fund. He thanked Diane Waldron, Director of Finance, Kathryn Kell and all the directors for their work in putting together the budget.

(b) Education Operating Budget. (Superintendent of Schools)

Dr. Bookman reviewed their mission saying that they strive to provide a 21st century learning environment. He spoke to their successes over the year including being named a district of distinction in technology and being recognized for their budget. He spoke to student success and remarked that the only constant is change. Board of Education Chairman Karp represented her fellow board members and said that their focus is providing excellent education for every student and the necessary resources for the staff. She said that they have reduced teaching position after careful and deliberate analysis always trying to achieve the reduction through retirements. She spoke to their successful LINKS program that not only keeps students in town but at a significant cost savings. She spoke to the success of self-insurance and energy savings initiatives.

Board of Education Chairman Karp also stated their priority to provide air conditioning for the schools emphasizing that 20% of the year is hot and humid to the degree that education is being adversely impacted. She said that they proposed a reduced project scope to focus on air conditioning for the classrooms only, bringing budget estimates from \$20M to less than \$2M. She continued saying that she looked forward to working with the Board of Finance and Town Council to improve the learning environment and bring equitable conditions across the school. She reviewed projected class sizes noting that four positions were proposed to be reduced from K-5, going from 5 teams to 4 in 8th grade and no changes anticipated at the High School for a total reduction of 24.3 teaching positions due to declining enrollment. She noted the decision to close Eastbury. She also noted the sharp increase to health insurance, pension and OPEB obligations.

Dr. Bookman said that originally, there was GPS for the buses in the budget but they did not support it for this year. He thanked his colleagues, the administrators and staff for their efforts and focus on an excellent education for students. He said that the current proposal after the Board of Education reduction is 3.03% noting that they are 8th in their DRG for per pupil

expenditures. He spoke to their success and said that he hoped they would be provided with the resources to continue that success.

7. Public Input

(a) Public Comments.

No one spoke

(b) Public vote to express an opinion on the proposed budget for the guidance of the Town Council. (Section 703 of the Town Charter).

Based on the town charter, Mr. Hassett asked all residents present to express their opinion on the proposed budget which provides guidance to the Town Council in their deliberations. All votes expressed were aye, in favor of the budget, and there were no nay votes.

8. Adjournment.

Motion By: Board Chairman. Karp **Seconded By:** Council Chairman Beckett
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Annual Town Meeting of Monday, January 30, 2017, adjourns at 8:03 pm.

Result: With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Meanix Miller

Kimberly Meanix Miller
Recording Clerk

Stewart Beckett, III
Chairman